

Message Text

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SUBJ: BREZHNEV STOPOVER IN KIEV

1. APPARENTLY EN ROUTE TO CRIMEA WHERE MEETING OF COMMUNIST LEADERS WILL REPORTEDLY CONVENE WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS, GENERAL SECRETARY BREZHNEV IS MAKING STOP-OVER IN KIEV. IN CONTRAST TO LAST VISIT TO KIEV IN FEBRUARY WHEN VISIT NOT MENTIONED IN CENTRAL PRESS, PRESENT STOPOVER RECEIVING FRONT PAGE ATTENTION.

2. BREZHNEV'S PRINCIPAL TRAVELLING COMPANIONS ARE DEPUTY PREMIER NURIYEV (WITH AGRICULTURAL RESPONSIBILITIES), MINISTER OF STATE PURCHASING ZOLOTUKHIN AND SPECIAL ASSISTANTS TSUKANOV, ALEKANDROV AND BLATOV. PRESENCE OF NURIYEV, ZOLOTUKHIN AND TSUKANOV IN PARTY INDICATES THAT AGRICULTURAL MATTERS PROBABLY HIGH ON THE AGENDA FOR MEETINGS WITH THE UKRAINIAN PARTY LEADERSHIP. (PRESUMABLY ALEKANDROV AND BLATOV ALONG IN CONNECTION WITH ONWARD TRAVEL TO THE CRIMEA.) IN CIRCUMSTANCES, ABSENCE OF POLITBURO MEMBER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE POLYANSKIY COULD BE POSSIBLE SIGN OF FURTHER WEAKENING OF HIS POSITION.

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3. KIEV VISIT ALSO GIVES BREZHNEV OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS

CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE UKRAINE IN WAKE OF SHELEST'S OUSTER FROM THE POLITBURO AND REMOVAL OF SOME OF HIS SUPPORTERS FROM KEY POSTS IN UKRAINIAN PARTY APPARATUS. PRESS NOTES THAT FOLLOWING ARRIVAL, BREZHNEV MET WITH UKRAINIAN PARTY HIERARCHY AND THEN WITH REPUBLICAN AND OBKOM PARTY AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS.

4. ADDITIONALLY, FOLLOWING RECENT HEAVY PREOCCUPATION WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS, KIEV STOPOVER PLACES SOME FOCUS ON BREZHNEV'S ROLE AS DOMESTIC LEADER AND PROVIDES HIM WITH OPPORTUNITY TO BOLSTER HIS IMAGE IN THE UKRAINE. IN SOMEWHAT UNUSUAL GESTURE, EFFORT WAS MADE TO GATHER CROWDS ALONG THE ROUTE USED BY BREZHNEV'S MOTORCADE IN KIEV. PICTURE OF BREZHNEV RIDING IN OPEN CAR WITH SHCHERBITSKIY, WHO MAY BE USING OCCASION OF VISIT TO BOLSTER FURTHER HIS OWN LOCAL IMAGE, WAS CARRIED IN SOME CENTRAL PAPERS ALTHOUGH NOT IN PRAVDA. PRESS NOTES THAT TV WILL COVER JOINT UKRAINIAN CENTRAL COMMITTEE AND SUPREME SOVIET SESSION JULY 26 AT WHICH UKRAINIAN REPUBLIC WILL BE GIVEN "ORDER OF FRIENDSHIP OF PEOPLES" PRESUMABLY BY BREZHNEV.

5. FURTHER CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCE OF PROBABLE COMMUNIST SUMMIT WITHIN FEW DAYS IS PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT OF ARRIVALS AT THE CRIMEA OF POLISH PARTY CHIEF GIEREK AND MONGOLIAN LEADER TSENDENBAL.
DUBS

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